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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
TOMMY CARELESS;  
~~W<sup>o</sup>~~ OR, THE  
MISFORTUNES  
OF  
A WEEK.

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EMBELLISHED WITH CUTS.

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THE  
MISFORTUNES  
OF  
A WEEK.

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I HAVE heard my papa and mamma say, that misfortunes seldom happen single, but frequently follow one another very closely. I have had the mortification to experience the truth of this observation, since, during the course of last week, nothing but misfortunes have attended me : they began on Sunday, and did not end till the Saturday following.

Sunday proving a very fine day, my papa and mamma took me with them on a visit to squire Noble,

6 *The Misfortunes of a Week.*

who has very fine gardens, and a handsome summer house, under which runs a noble canal, well stocked with fish. We had a very elegant dinner, and never did I before feast on such a variety of excellent fruits.

After dinner we adjourned to the garden, and having examined its beauties for some time, we went up into the summer house, where the gentlemen entertained themselves in agreeable and rational conversation. For my own part, I was perfectly happy, and did not dream of any approaching misfortunes.

I got to the summer house window, and was highly delighted with the beautiful prospect that every where surrounded me. On a sudden, some large fish in the canal happening to catch my eye, I was so eager to view them as they darted

along, that leaning too much out of the window, I lost my balance, and out I fell headlong into the water, as you here see.



It luckily happened, that the canal was not very deep ; and, as I had not received any hurt in the fall, I

scrambled out before any body could get to my assistance. However, my new coat was totally spoiled, and as I was obliged to go to bed while my clothes were drying, I lost all future pleasure for that day, bewailing my misfortune with tears as I lay in bed. My father told me I was rightly served, and he hoped it would teach me not to lean too far out of a window any more.

By the time that it was thought necessary to return home, my clothes were sufficiently dry for me to put on, so I dressed myself, and went home with my papa and mamma without having any inclination to say a word ; but they conversed together, on the many accidents that happen to children, merely on account of their want of thought.

However, by the next morning I had forgotten what had passed the preceding day, and therefore set hard to work to make me a new kite. Before noon, I had not only got it into strings, but had even pasted on the covering of fine white paper. I then set me down to draw some fine stars, and also an ornament for the two glass eyes, with which I intended to decorate it ; and, while I was employed in this business, I dispatched the footman with a shilling, which was all the money I was master of, to procure me as much twine as that little sum would purchase.

Before dinner time, I had made me one of the prettiest kites that ever eyes beheld ; and as I had made it upon the truest principles, I doubted not but it would give me every degree of satisfaction I could

## 10 *The Misfortunes of a Week.*

wish for. Indeed, so much was my mind taken up with my intended afternoon's pleasure, that I allowed myself hardly time to eat my dinner, and set out with my kite some time before my papa and mamma rose from table.

I no sooner got into the field, than up went my kite, and did you



ever see a kite fly more steadily than it does ? Having let out all my string, I stood to admire the height it was then at, and how little it looked ; when, having somehow or other neglected properly to fasten the string to the stick, it got loose, and away went, for ever, both kite and string.

To add to my grief, my papa and mamma came up at this instant to see how I succeeded in my business. They arrived just time enough to see it tumbling headlong to the ground, and to be witness to my sorrowful lamentations on that melancholy occasion.

I returned home, overwhelmed with sorrow and disappointment. As we went along, my papa told me, that my loss arose from the careless manner in which I had fas-

tened the string to the stick. This, he said, was the consequence of doing things in too much hurry, since, had I allowed myself but a minute or two longer, I should have still been in possession of both my kite and my string.

I could have easily made another kite, but the string was a terrible loss, as I had laid out my whole stock in the purchase of it. I began to recollect how many little things that shilling would have bought me, and therefore determined never more to do any thing in a hurry, or without properly thinking.

The next day, which was Tuesday, I hoped would afford me some amends for my previous misfortunes, for I should have told you this was my holiday week.

I was this morning walking in the orchard, endeavouring to form my plan for the rest of the day, when, by chance, I espied a most beautiful apple hanging at the end of a slender branch. Have it I must ; but how to get it was the difficulty. I had no ladder, and I did not choose to trouble any of the servants ; nor could I find any stick long enough to reach the bough ; and as to knocking it down with a stone, that would bruise the apple and spoil it. However, after a long consultation with myself, I determined to try at climbing the tree.

As the body of the tree was not very long, I easily got to the part from whence the branches proceeded, and there rested myself a little time, much pleased with the pleasantness of my situation, being surrounded with nice apples ; but none

## 14 *The Misfortunes of a Week.*

of these would serve me : I had pitched upon one, and that one I must have.

Thoughtless of the danger that attended it, I proceeded gradually on the bough which held the favorite apple, without considering, that it was too weak to support my weight, little as I was : so that, before I had proceeded half way on it, snap it went, and down came I and the apple together, as you here see.



As I hurt myself in the fall, I cried out most bitterly, when the servants came running to my assistance ; and my papa seeing they were bringing me into the house in their arms, doubted not but I had broken either a leg or an arm.

However, upon examination, my bones were found to be all safe ; and I was instantly put to bed, not so much out of necessity, as by way of punishment.

As I had no inclination to sleep, I could not help reflecting how many misfortunes we bring on ourselves for want of thought. A moment's consideration would have been sufficient to convince me of the danger of venturing on so slender a bough ; but the apple was the tempter ; and, as my papa told me, temptation is very dangerous to young persons, who therefore should be constantly on their guard.

When I got up on the Wednesday morning, I resolved to stay at home all that day, in order, if possible, to avoid any accident by going abroad. I therefore got two pieces of chalk, and proceeded to

cut them out into dump moulds. I then ground them, as I thought, so nicely, that not even the least air could pass between them.

I then divided them into proper partitions, and with my compasses drew as many circles as I chose, when I proceeded to mark them with such slight devices as I was capable of.

I had finished my moulds, without at all considering how or where I was to procure lead, as I had no money to buy any. However, the cook-maid removed every difficulty of this kind, by supplying me with two old pewter spoons. These I soon broke into pieces, and having melted them in the bowl of a pipe, proceeded to casting, as you here see.



When I first began to cast, I proceeded with all the caution possible, for fear of any accident ; but, after I had cast a dozen or two, I thought myself master of my business, and therefore went on more carelessly.

After some time, holding the moulds rather incautiously, and

pouring a whole bowlful of metal into them, it ran through the moulds over my fore-finger, when down went the moulds, and I set up such a halloo that soon brought the whole family round me. My finger was sadly burnt ; but proper oils were instantly applied to it, which soon fetched out the fire but left me in very great pain.

My father again talked to me of the sad consequences of carelessness, and I determined to be more upon my guard for the future. I therefore resolved to stay at home all the next day, which was Thursday, and do nothing but what was absolutely necessary to be done, as I thought that was the only means of avoiding any misfortunes that could possibly arise from carelessness.

As soon as I got up, according to my usual custom, I fed my favour-

ite canary bird, and gave him fresh water, having first carefully cleaned the bottom of the cage. For this kindness he repaid me with one of his best songs, clapped his wings, and did every thing in his power to express his gratitude.

Never did any little fellow take more pains than I did this day to avoid falling into errors. After breakfast I took a serious walk in the garden, and avoided touching even so much as a flour, a cherry, an apple, or a current, so determined was I to do nothing wrong.

Dinner time arrived, and nothing that I knew of had hitherto gone amiss, which gave me no small degree of pleasure and satisfaction. I then amused myself with looking over all my little books, and reading many of the pretty tales they

contained. From hence I learned, in addition to what my papa had told me, that, though play and pastime were conducive to the health of little boys and girls, yet it was necessary for them to take care that they run into no kind of mischief by carelessness and inattention.

Tea-time passed over without any apparent accident, and when the hour for supper arrived, I sat down at table highly elated with my having committed no error that day ; but my joy was soon damped : on looking up to the cage, I saw no canary-bird on the perch, and therefore began to fear that all was not right. I instantly took the cage down, and to my utter astonishment, found my poor bird lay mo-

22 *The Misfortunes of a Week.*  
tionless and dead at the bottom, as  
you here see.



I insisted on it, that this could arise from no carelessness of mine, as I had cleaned the cage in the

morning, and given him a fresh supply of victuals and water. My papa, however, soon convinced me of my error, by shewing me, that when I put in the glass fountain with water, I carelessly turned the hole of it in such a manner, that the bird could not get at it, which was undoubtedly the cause of his death.

My papa did not say any thing further to me, but gave me such a look as sufficiently made me sensible of his displeasure. I rose from table, went to bed without my supper, and cried myself to sleep.

Five days of my holidays were now unfortunately passed, and such a series of disasters perhaps never before befel any poor boy. I determined, however, to try what this day

24 *The Misfortunes of a Week.*

would produce, and endeavoured to amuse myself with angling ; but I had no lines to make use of ; at least, I wanted long horse hairs for that purpose, without which, hooks and floats would be of no use.

I accordingly went into the stable and began plucking the long hairs out of the tail of old Dobbin, in this manner.



Whether I plucked too hard, or otherwise put Dobbin to pain, I can not tell ; but he lifted up one of his legs, and gave such a kick, that, had it not happily escaped me, which it very narrowly did, I must have been killed on the spot.

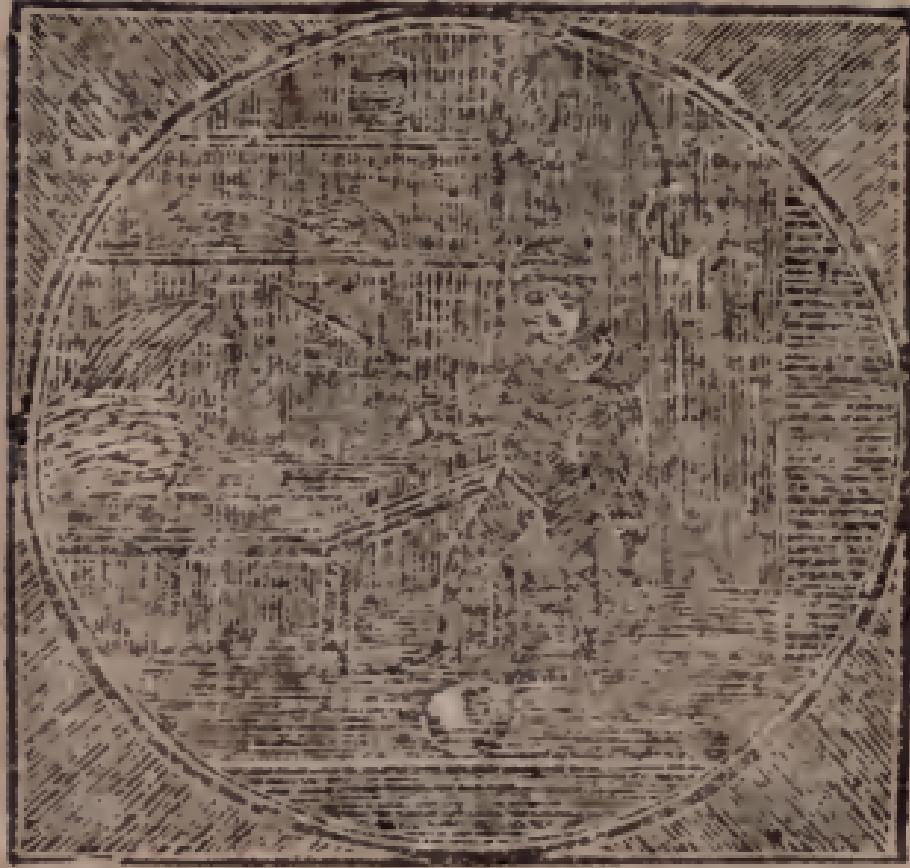
However, though it missed me, it completely dispatched my father's favourite pointer, who was close behind me, he having followed me into the stable. As the dog's death was occasioned by my imprudence, I dared not shew my face in the house, but rambled about the fields, and at night hid myself in the hay-loft.

As I did not make my appearance at dinner-time, my parents began to be alarmed for my safety, and the servants were dispatched different ways in pursuit of me, with strict orders to use me tenderly when they found me, and to assure me that every thing would be forgiven me. However, they missed me, and I stole to my retreat in the hay-loft unperceived.

As I had eat but very little during the whole day, and consequent-

I could not get at any thing during the night, I stole out of the hay-loft as soon as it was day-light, and found means to get into the pantry, where I knew I should find plenty enough, at the same time resolving to surrender myself to my dear parents, as soon as they rose.

As the morning was very cloudy, and all the pantry windows were shut up, I was obliged to grope about, in order to find something to eat. As I was so doing, my finger by chance slipped into a mouse-trap, when down came the spring, as you here see.



You will naturally suppose, that the pain I was in made me roar out loudly, which, as every thing was then quiet, and the pantry near the stair-case, was plainly heard from top to bottom of the house.

In less than five minutes, the pantry represented the stage of one

of our theatres, where all the heroes of the piece generally meet in the last scene of the fifth act. Down came my papa and mamma, John the coachman, William the footman, Molly the cook-maid, and every other servant in the house.

The windows of the pantry being immediately opened, my situation was soon discovered, when my papa opened the trap, which released my finger. On his perceiving I had received no material injury, he took me up in his arms, and carried me to his bed chamber. He could not, however, help smiling at the odd figure all the parties made, not one of them being half dressed.

I was perfectly ashamed and confused at the trouble I had given every one, but in particular my dear papa and mamma. I therefore fell

on my knees, and crying bitterly, begged their pardon.

My dear parents readily forgave me, on my promising to be more careful for the future, and not bring on myself another disagreeable week, such as that had been. Indeed, every day had produced some misfortune, all owing to my own carelessness and inattention. However, I have now passed another week, without any thing that has given myself or others pain.

Let me advise all my pretty readers, never to lean too forward out of a window, lest they fall and injure, if not kill themselves ; when they fly their kite, let them take care properly to fasten the string ; let them never venture on the weak arm of a tree, lest it break and fall with them ; let them never play with scalding lead ; let them take



care to feed their birds properly ; never to rob a horse of part of its tail, lest his heels make them repent it ; and never steal into a pantry, lest their fingers be caught in a trap. The moral of all this means, do whatever you are set about with *prudence* and *precaution*.

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